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Report of the Ad Hoc Advisory Group on Haiti

Summary

The present report highlights the main findings of the Economic and Social Council Ad Hoc Advisory Group on Haiti following its visits to Washington, D.C., and Haiti. The report describes the tangible progress observed in Haiti in the reconstruction process and in various socioeconomic sectors. It also stresses the extreme vulnerability that the country continues to face and the need to carry out important reforms to sustain progress and translate them into long-term development. The report covers areas in which there is a shared responsibility between the Haitian authorities and their development partners to create the conditions for the country to continue to improve. While the Government of Haiti needs to take action to unleash the full potential of the economy and improve governance, partners should continue to support Haiti at appropriate levels, through the United Nations Stabilization Mission in Haiti (MINUSTAH) and the United Nations country team and through donor support to the Government's plans and priorities. At the present stage, there are many encouraging signs, but there are also risks that could destabilize a real but fragile momentum. The Group is therefore of the view that Haiti should remain high on the international agenda and, in that regard presents, in the concluding part of the report, recommendations addressed to the Haitian authorities and their development partners on ways to ensure that the country benefits fully from continued international assistance.

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I. Introduction

1. The present report is the ninth submitted by the Ad Hoc Advisory Group on Haiti since its reactivation in 2004. Following a request made by the Government of Haiti at that time, the Economic and Social Council adopted resolution 2004/52, by which it decided to reactivate the Group, which was established in 1999 to help to coordinate the development of a long-term programme of support for the country.

Mandate and composition of the Group

2. In accordance with Council decisions 2004/322, 2009/211, 2009/267, 2011/207, 2011/211 and 2013/209, the Group is composed of the permanent representatives of the Bahamas, Benin, Brazil, Canada, Chile, El Salvador, France, Haiti, Mexico, Peru, Spain and Trinidad and Tobago to the United Nations and the representative of the United States of America to the Economic and Social Council. Since its first meeting, on 23 November 2004, the Group has been chaired by the Permanent Representative of Canada to the United Nations. As stipulated in decision 2004/322, the President of the Economic and Social Council and the Special Representative of the Secretary-General for Haiti are invited to take part in the meetings of the Group.

3. In its resolution 2012/21, the Economic and Social Council decided to extend the mandate of the Ad Hoc Advisory Group on Haiti until the substantive session of 2013, with the purpose of following closely and providing advice on Haiti's long-term development strategy to promote socioeconomic recovery, reconstruction and stability, with particular attention to the need to ensure coherence and sustainability in international support for Haiti, based on the long-term national development priorities, building on the Strategic Development Plan for Haiti, and stressing the need to avoid overlap and duplication with respect to existing mechanisms. The Council also requested the Group to report on its work, activities in support of the recovery, reconstruction and development of the country, with recommendations, as appropriate, to the Council at its substantive session of 2013.

Outline of the activities of the Group

4. The visits of the Group to Washington, D.C., and Haiti are the basis for most of the conclusions contained in the present report. On 29 April 2013, the Group went to Washington, D.C., where it had meetings with senior officials from the World Bank, the International Monetary Fund, the Inter-American Development Bank (IADB) and the Organization of American States (OAS). A working lunch with an academician was also organized. From 28 to 31 May 2013, the Group made its annual visit to Haiti, where it met Prime Minister Laurent Lamothe and Minister of Interior David Bazile, as well as high-level officials from various Government offices, civil society representatives and a wide range of development actors. The Group approached the development challenges of Haiti from the angle of efforts made towards implementing an effective decentralization policy in the country. To that end, the Group visited several projects in the metropolitan area of Port-au-Prince and went to the South Department, where it met local authorities in Les Cayes and visited sites and projects in the area. In addition, in preparation for these two visits, the Group participated in a meeting jointly organized by the Group of Friends of Haiti in New York and the Deputy Special Representative of the

Secretary-General and Deputy Head of the United Nations Stabilization Mission in Haiti (MINUSTAH).

5. Members of the Ad Hoc Advisory Group on Haiti wish to express their profound gratitude to the Haitian authorities, civil society representatives and development partners of the country who spared no time to explain their activities and share analysis with the Group, both in Haiti and in Washington, D.C. The Group wishes to express its particular appreciation for the open and constructive exchange with Mr. Laurent Lamothe, Prime Minister and Minister of Planning and External Cooperation and Mr. David Bazile, Minister of Interior. In addition, the Group is grateful to the Department of Economic and Social Affairs of the Secretariat for its constant and dedicated support to its work, to the Special Representative of the Secretary-General and Head of MINUSTAH a.i., the Deputy Special Representative of the Secretary-General/Resident Coordinator/Humanitarian Coordinator a.i. and their able team, as well as the entire United Nations country team, for their excellent support during the visit. The programme of the Group's visits to Washington, D.C., and Haiti is annexed to the present report.

II. Progress on the ground

6. During its visit to Haiti, the Group witnessed noticeable progress on various fronts. While the improvements are not sufficient to consider that Haiti is on a sustained path to long-term development, they are testimony to considerable efforts made by the Haitian authorities and various sectors of the society to rebuild what was destroyed by the devastating earthquake of 2010 and to respond to social needs and promote economic growth.

7. On the humanitarian front, tangible results have been achieved. Nearly 80 per cent of the 1.5 million persons displaced after the earthquake have returned to their neighbourhoods or have been relocated. Rental subsidies and cash incentive programmes have played an important role in achieving that objective. In the health sector, the number of people newly affected by the cholera epidemic has been considerably reduced and mortality rates lowered to 1.2 per cent as of December 2012. Support by the Directorate of Civil Protection of Haiti, the United Nations and several non-governmental organizations was crucial in August and October 2012, when Haiti was affected by Hurricane Isaac and Hurricane Sandy, respectively. Disaster preparedness has been enhanced in Haiti. Humanitarian engagement produces concrete results and should be sustained until the transition from early relief to sustainable development is well established. However, the Humanitarian Action Plan for 2013, which aims to assist one million people identified as the most vulnerable, including with food assistance, and requires $144 million in international assistance, is not adequately funded (28 per cent as of June 2013). With the start of the cyclone season, it is of particular importance that donors increase their support to the Plan.

8. Beyond the satisfaction of immediate needs, the Group noted welcome progress in the reconstruction and building of infrastructure, particularly in the Port-au-Prince area. A fully functioning airport, more paved streets, the installation of solar lamps in the main streets and the construction of new hotels have changed the landscape of the city. In some provinces as well, infrastructure has improved, with new roads, new schools, the creation of an additional industrial park and an international airport that will open soon in Cap-Haïtien, the second city of the country.

In addition, the mining sector has been reactivated, and tourism is developing slowly.

9. Such concrete progress should encourage the donor community, the private sector and the Haitian diaspora to support new projects. While in its previous reports the Group praised the considerable efforts made to ensure debris removal after the earthquake, it finds particularly encouraging the country's successful initiation of a second phase of recovery efforts, marked by effective reconstruction.

10. During its visit to Haiti, the Group met a wide range of Haitian interlocutors and held very productive meetings with them. The priorities for action set by the Government, known as the "five Es",[1] are known by all and were articulated in a very consistent way, whether in Port-au-Prince or in Les Cayes. While development partners continue to play an important role in advising and sometimes mentoring implementation efforts, development policies seem to be increasingly owned by Haitian officials, a prerequisite for increased effectiveness of development assistance.

11. The conditional cash transfer programmes of the Government of Haiti constitute a tangible way of asserting the role of the State in redistributing wealth and responding to basic needs. They include direct support to mothers whose children attend schools, food assistance, financial support to students and emergency assistance for victims of natural disasters. The school programme, for example, has contributed to an increase in primary school enrolment (77 per cent to date). As close to three quarters of the Haitian population continues to live on less than two dollars a day, cash transfer programmes are not a panacea. Nevertheless, they can have an important multiplying effect on the local economy, and they mark a turning point in the perception of the State as a valuable actor in supporting those who need it most. To make the best use of the funds allocated to the programmes and consistently target the most vulnerable, the programmes will need to be assessed, with specific benchmarks set and a proper methodology used.

12. In some sectors, progress has been achieved as a result of continuous efforts carried out over the years, in particular since the political transition in 2004 and the major increase in international assistance that followed. According to the findings of the 2012 Demographic and Health Survey (Enquête mortalité, morbidité et utilisation des services, EMMUS V), many indicators show marked improvement as compared with the situation in 2006. In particular, increased vaccination rates and prenatal care coverage led to a decline in infant and child mortality rates, which were 88 per thousand, compared to 131 per thousand for the period 1984-1994. The fertility rate in Haiti has dropped from 6.3 children per woman in 1987 to 4.0 in 2006 and 3.5 in 2012. This is an encouraging trend that will have major consequences for the long-term development of the country, and is particularly noticeable in urban areas, where slightly over half (52 per cent) of the country's population reside in 2013, an important shift in Haitian society.

13. Similarly, the proportion of the population using improved sanitation facilities has doubled, but that still means that only a quarter of Haitians use improved facilities. Taking into account the high prevalence of contagious diseases, a higher priority should be given to the subsidized introduction of improved sanitation facilities, under the supervision of sanitation services.

[1] Education, environment, employment, energy and the rule of law (état de droit).

14. The preceding example illustrates the progress that remains to be made in Haiti. However, the positive trends noted should be viewed as encouragement for continued support to the country, with the expectation that progress will accelerate, building on existing successes and with the active involvement of all relevant actors. The Group did note the concern of international partners that the improvement in socioeconomic indicators, reached following a period of a high level of funding in the aftermath of the earthquake, could suffer a reverse with the downward trend in official development assistance (ODA) to Haiti in 2013.

III. Sustaining development: bold efforts required on various fronts

15. Despite the positive outcomes described in the preceding section, Haiti's development partners share the view that progress is slow compared to the level of international support offered to Haiti. While the growth rate reached 5.4 per cent following the earthquake, in 2011 12 (October-September) it slowed down to 2.8 per cent, a lower rate than expected by most economists. There is a broad consensus among development actors present in the country regarding the reasons for this state of affairs.

Strengthening national capacities: the need for a new strategy

16. One of the main factors that hinder reconstruction and development is the lack of national capacity to absorb international assistance. The disappointing growth rate is largely due to low execution of Government investments, aggravated by a series of natural shocks. Owing to weak administrative capacities, the Government encounters difficulties in spending all donor funding. For example, IADB has considerably increased its financial contributions to Haiti since the earthquake, but the amount of undisbursed funds is growing. As the support provided by international financial institutions and some other donors is channelled through Government agencies, which is in all instances a welcome modus operandi, the potential for development support to Haiti is largely underutilized. Consequently, public debt resulting from ODA remains low.

17. Bilateral funding and special programmes of support to Haiti experience the same difficulties. The risk of donor fatigue is therefore high, only three years after the devastating earthquake that destroyed much of the country's administrative and economic structures. The rate of fulfilment of international development commitments and the disbursements of ODA funds declined in 2012. Given the acute needs of the population and the relatively small Haitian State apparatus, the situation calls for a new strategy that takes fully into account Haitian capacities sector by sector, with a plan to adjust support accordingly and include systematically a capacity-building component in programming.

18. The Group met with representatives of the Office of Management and Human Resources, established under the Office of the Prime Minister, to lead a State reform process with support from different partners. Plans to rationalize administrative structures and reform the civil service, including by offering career plans to civil servants, were presented to the Group by a motivated team that had developed an ambitious programme for State reform. The reform is necessarily a long process which may need up to 10 years. It should therefore be implemented through a

pragmatic method in order to yield tangible results in specific priority areas and lay the groundwork for future progress.

19. As such an important endeavour will take time, it is possible that international experts and advisers may create new skills or enhance existing ones in areas where urgent progress is needed, keeping in mind the pace of progress in the reform of the structures of the Haitian State. The mentoring provided by the United Nations system to promote greater autonomy and improved governance can inspire larger-scale activities by other development partners. A valuable example of this approach is the ongoing technical support provided by the United Nations to the Directorate of Civil Protection and the gradual transition from the humanitarian cluster system to one of support to Government and local offices to enable them to lead disaster preparedness and response. The civil affairs components of MINUSTAH and other United Nations entities also play an important role in providing community-based support focused on strengthening local capacities, particularly at the levels of the 10 departments, where administrative structures need to be strengthened, and the municipalities, where they are particularly weak.

20. Other examples of good mentoring can be found in the wide range of development cooperation activities carried out on the ground. They should be scaled up and utilized as a method for providing support to Haiti. The experience of countries where civil servants from other nations came to mentor their counterparts, such as in South Sudan, could also inspire renewed efforts to strengthen local administrative and management capacities, in particular in the provinces.

Ensuring the sustainability of development programmes: a shared responsibility

21. Enhanced capacities are also important to sustain projects which are initiated by international organizations on a pilot basis and which are expected to be taken over by national institutions and replicated in other areas. Many projects in important areas, such as reforestation or watershed management, are known for not having been sustained and for mixed results. However, the country's forest cover represents less than 2 per cent of the territory of Haiti, and 85 per cent of the watersheds are degraded, which causes frequent floods, soil erosion and impoverished agricultural production. A careful assessment of failures and successes should be made to better focus future investments. The Group took note of the recent Political Champions for Disaster Resilience mission to Haiti with the objective of bringing attention to the importance of disaster prevention, preparedness and response and supporting Government efforts in that area, including updating the national plan for disaster risk management, establishing a thematic table on disaster resilience and piloting disaster resilience in one or two departments.

22. During its visit, the Group visited a legal aid programme funded by MINUSTAH as one of its community violence reduction projects. The programme was implemented in partnership with the Bar Association of Port-au-Prince in support of reducing pretrial and illegal detentions. The project allows young Haitian professionals to gain technical or legal skills and make immediate use of them. The Group also visited a joint housing and neighbourhood programme of the United Nations Human Settlements Programme (UN-Habitat), the International Organization for Migration (IOM), the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA) and the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), in particular the activities in the municipality of Tabarre, in the metropolitan area, for which local authorities

coordinate and monitor reconstruction and urbanization plans through geographic information systems. The programme also provides the means for the creation of community resource centres throughout targeted areas in five departments. The legal aid programme is expected to be absorbed by the Ministry of Justice of Haiti in phases (20 per cent each year). The housing programme should lead to grounded technical skills in the 10 municipalities where it is implemented and is meant to be replicated in other regions under the leadership of the Ministry of Interior.

23. The Group stresses the need to sustain the above-mentioned projects, which have already proven their usefulness, as exemplified by the fact that over a thousand people in pretrial detention have been liberated from prison as a result of the legal support provided to them. It calls on the authorities to take effective measures to gradually assume the responsibility for execution of the projects, in accordance with the calendar agreed with United Nations organizations. Letting these programmes expire would be a considerable loss of the knowledge and experience that Haiti needs most. Including them in the budget of the respective ministries and local authorities is therefore of particular importance, which donors should fully recognize and support.

Building trust and legitimate institutions

24. All the interlocutors of the Group stressed the importance of political stability to attract investors to the country and retain them. The holding of partial senatorial and countrywide municipal elections in 2013 remains of utmost importance to promote stability and give positive signals to development partners. A temporary electoral council has been established, and the elections are scheduled to take place by the end of 2013, after a new electoral law is passed by Parliament. The Group stresses the need to comply with the commitments made in that respect to avoid a major institutional crisis that could reverse some of the progress made so far. Promoting the rule of law should remain a priority in Haiti.

25. Duly elected local councils and mayors are a prerequisite for legitimate political action in the provinces and effective decentralization. The Group is encouraged by efforts made by the Office of Management and Human Resources, within the State reform process, to plan for effective administrative decentralization and launch the decentralization process. Basic State functions, such as issuing identification documents, remain concentrated in Port-au-Prince, a situation which de facto deprives citizens outside the capital of access to administrative services and the enjoyment of their rights as citizens. Decentralization will, in addition, allow locally elected officials to engage in economic and social activities at the level of their community. Considerable capacity-building efforts are needed to that end, and the donor community has confirmed interest in supporting this long-awaited fundamental reform. However, the level of international support will also depend on the capacity to have legitimate and credible political counterparts in office in municipalities and departments.

26. The reform process outlined above implies the establishment of a properly managed local public finance system. At present, 97 per cent of municipal finances are allocated by the Ministry of Interior. This requirement also applies to the overall State structure. The reconstruction of the Superior Court of Auditors and Administrative Disputes is a welcome step by the authorities to empower this institution, which is critical for governance. According to international financial

institutions, the number of outstanding public accounts has been reduced, funding is increasingly reflected in the budget and laws considered by Parliament include the funding of additional sectors, such as education and school enrolment allowances.

27. Nevertheless, additional progress in the management of public finance is needed. Haitian and international interlocutors of the Group lamented the lack of transparency in the management of funds received following Hurricane Sandy. Competitive bidding procedures were lifted in order to provide quick relief and to engage in reconstruction without delay. Such practices may fuel a sentiment of suspicion within Haitian society, which would contradict the goal of confidence building with economic players and could discourage donors. To make progress on that front, procurement procedures should be streamlined, with specific deadlines to accelerate processes, and their use should be better mastered by civil servants. Special measures such as insuring facilities against risks should also be put into place to provide incentives to foreign contractors to take part in the reconstruction process.

28. The national budget of Haiti continues to depend on international support for more than half of its total. To balance that situation, increasing tax revenues is of major importance, although repeated invitations to do so by the international community have not led to significant improvement to date. The current target for revenue collection is 13 per cent of gross domestic product (GDP). Haitian society cannot elude the issue, and political authorities should demonstrate the will to enforce legislation and reduce exemptions. Taking such steps would have the double effect of increasing trust in the capacity of the State to redistribute wealth, thereby reducing social tensions and creating an equitable and predictable playing field for economic actors.

Unleashing the full potential of the Haitian economy

29. As long as some fundamental reforms are not carried out, the Haitian economy will continue to be limited in its capacity to generate sustained and equitable growth and create jobs. The lack of a proper land registration system is cited by all as a critical problem that must be solved. In rural areas, such a system would provide long-awaited legal security to small farmers and support development of the agricultural sector, which has the potential to provide benefits in terms of both improved food security and the creation of employment. In the metropolitan area of Port-au-Prince, where camps for displaced persons are being closed, there is an acute need for management of land and real estate tenure to determine the status of occupation prior to the earthquake and strengthen security of tenure. Land titles are a condition for obtaining construction licences and consequently give a boost to the reconstruction of the city. The Group was informed that some pilot work is ongoing, led by the Interministerial Committee for Territorial Management, with funding from France and IADB.

30. The Group is aware of the sensitivity of the issue and of the risk of social tensions that may arise from any attempt to streamline the system. However, such a reform is indispensable, and an ambitious mechanism should be established to elaborate a new and adequate system, with broad involvement of the political class (Government, Parliament, local authorities and so on) and civil society, with appropriate support by donors. Mediation procedures to solve land disputes should be established within this framework.

31. There is also an urgent need to strengthen the civil registry system. Birth certificates are delivered almost exclusively in cities, making it difficult for people in rural areas to access this basic service. According to the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), close to 2 million people are in need of official identification, among them many children. The Organization of American States has played an important role in supporting the provision of national identification cards, but those activities stopped in 2012, and there is a need for wide-scale follow-up support to answer unsatisfied needs.

32. These deep lacunas in civil registration and land title systems hamper access to credit by many Haitians who cannot present any guarantee to financial institutions. The insurance sector is also insufficiently developed for the same reasons. Credit rates are high and microfinancing is not very developed, including in rural areas where it could be of much use. The banking sector should play its part in improving the situation, but its capacity to take reasonable risks, analyse projects and close financing files is also reported to be in need for improvement. A new generation of entrepreneurs has emerged in Haiti in recent years, but it cannot realize its full potential in the current context. The Haitian authorities should, together with the international financial institutions, play a proactive role in addressing the weaknesses of the financial sector by supporting it towards increased performance.

33. In its previous reports, the Group stated the need to improve the commercial code, the regulatory framework and administrative practices to facilitate business. The Prime Minister has announced measures to accelerate the process of opening new businesses. However, progress has been slow and uneven. In some sectors of the economy, such as the water utility, reforms are under way while in others, such as the energy sector, management practices take time to be streamlined in spite of a chronic financial deficit and a high cost of energy that penalizes businesses. In regard to transport, while roads are being built or rebuilt with significant results, transportation costs continue to be high and the functioning of port authorities remains inadequate for the needs of an island country. The reasons for the uneven pace of reforms are sometimes unclear, which fuels suspicions as to the political will to change the status quo and give opportunities to new economic actors. Such doubts should be cleared up if Haiti is to attract investors and retain the international contractors, already limited in number, which operate in the country.

Recognizing the role of a vibrant civil society

34. Beyond the economic, legal, administrative or political bottlenecks presented above, the development of Haiti will, in the end, depend on the ability of the country to leverage the talents of its vibrant youth and create an enabling environment for them to contribute to the development of the country. Young women are particularly affected by unemployment and are offered very few opportunities. A strategic plan for developing sectors where jobs can be created for youth should be formulated, with a particular focus on jobs for young women. Those sectors could include culture, social work or services, among others, to use the full potential of the well-known creativity of the Haitian people.

35. A strategic longer-term plan should be elaborated in close consultation with Haitian civil society, given the strong culture that exists in the country and the vast number of community-based associations, including women and youth groups, whether formal or informal. The proliferation of external non-State actors,

particularly following the 2010 earthquake, often connected to access to development assistance, has not always helped social cohesion and mutual confidence. A Government-led initiative which would involve the above-mentioned actors in the elaboration of a shared vision for the development of the country could help to bring civil society organizations and non-State actors into a closer working relationship and relieve social tensions.

36. At a meeting held on the margins of the General Assembly in September 2012, the Government of Haiti made an important and visible commitment to strengthen partnerships with non-governmental organizations. However, the national forum scheduled to take place in Port-au-Prince in May of 2013, as a follow-up to the New York meeting, was postponed and is now envisaged to take place in September 2013. The Group, which met with Haitian civil society representatives and heard their call for enhanced dialogue and collaboration with the Government, encourages the latter to honour the commitment made at the United Nations in 2012, and to undertake consultations on legislation related to the status of non-governmental organizations prior to the national forum.

37. In addition to those endeavours, there should be enhanced efforts to help Haitian society transcend the underlying political and social differences hindering the emergence of a national consensus and the implementation of governmental development strategies in various sectors. Such efforts would contribute to addressing the root causes of the problems encountered in Haiti and ensuring the irreversibility of gains made in the process of normalization of the country.

38. Overall, the Group was encouraged by the willingness of the Government of Haiti, expressed by its representatives, including Prime Minister Lamothe, to engage with reform. It is clear that the Government is increasingly in the driver's seat. The international community also has a major responsibility to provide support in the most effective possible way.

IV. A new momentum for aid effectiveness

39. Since the visit of the Group in 2012, the development assistance landscape in Haiti has changed significantly. The Interim Haiti Reconstruction Commission, established following the earthquake, which was co-chaired by the Prime Minister of Haiti and President Clinton, no longer exists. New modalities to frame the relationship between the Government and its development partners have been put in place. The strategic plan for the development of Haiti, which is the basis for that relationship, outlines the long-term vision of the Government and the ambition that Haiti may become an emerging country by 2030. To achieve that goal, the strategic plan will be translated in successive triennial investment plans that will focus on growth acceleration and poverty reduction. The first plan, for the period 2014-2016, is being finalized and it will be included in the 2013-2014 finance law, which is to be presented to Parliament.

A new mechanism for coordinated donor support

40. A new external aid coordination framework was launched in November 2012 in order to establish a better alignment between external development aid and national priorities. It has been elaborated through an inclusive consultation process between the Haitian authorities and the Group of Twelve Plus, an informal

coordination group of 13 donors in Haiti. Chaired by the Prime Minister, the framework is placed under the strategic and technical leadership of the Government and therefore constitutes a welcome opportunity to ensure national ownership of development assistance.

41. The external aid coordination framework is the platform for strengthening mutual accountability between Haitian stakeholders and the international community. The Group encouraged the establishment of such a mutual accountability mechanism, echoing the call that the United Nations has been making in this regard since 2011. The Group welcomes the establishment of the framework, which is all the more important in the context of the general slow-down in international development assistance, with increased competition for such support. The Group calls on all partners to commit to the operationalization of the framework, under the leadership of the Ministry of Planning and External Cooperation.

42. Two joint dialogue mechanisms between the Government, development partners, civil society and the private sector have been established under the framework. The Committee on Aid Effectiveness is scheduled to meet at the local level four to six times a year, and twice a year at the international level. At the Committee's first international meeting on 10 May 2013, the Prime Minister presented the Government's priorities and general objectives for 2014-2016, based on five key priorities, "five Es" and on the framework of the strategic plan for 2013-2014. The Group notes that some of the "Es" have been broadened, education being associated with human and social development, environment with land management, employment with the economy and the rule of law with democracy.

43. Secondly, sector and thematic tables (tables sectorielles et thématiques) have been relaunched within the framework to cover 13 areas of development work. Although work organized in accordance with these tables has produced mixed results in the past, with some areas functioning better than others, they are considered to be an important mechanism to ensure both national ownership and donor coordination in specific areas of work. Work organized under the table dealing with State reform will support the process led by the Office of Management and Human Resources, which will affect the work of various Ministries and address the cross-cutting issue of enhancing administrative capacities.

44. At present, several donors provide assistance in the same or in related sectors. In addition, with the introduction of the coordination framework, the Government is increasingly expected to be in the driver's seat and to solicit donor support for specific areas where such assistance is best suited to the needs of the country. The progressive and coordinated "specialization" of donors in more defined areas of support would streamline the process and contribute to aid effectiveness.

45. In this context, the Group encourages the implementation of the external aid management module supported by the Ministry of Planning and External Cooperation and UNDP, among others. The module is an important tool for increasing the transparency of external aid and strengthening the Government's capacity to manage external assistance.

United Nations support in a context of consolidation of activities

46. The United Nations system continues to play an important role in supporting the Government, including through its mentoring capacities in Port-au-Prince and in the provinces. The Deputy Special Representative of the Secretary-General, who is also Resident Coordinator and Humanitarian Coordinator, usually chairs the Group of donors (the Group of Twelve Plus) and it is expected that the new Deputy Special Representative will do the same when he or she assumes duty. The secretariat of the Group is hosted by the office of the Deputy Special Representative.

47. The United Nations country team is composed of 18 resident agencies whose work, together with the activities of MINUSTAH in the development field, is reflected in the integrated strategic framework for the period 2013-2016, which has replaced the United Nations Development Assistance Framework and which constitutes a "One United Nations" initiative. The Government of Haiti has signed the integrated strategic framework, which is founded on the main pillars and priorities of the strategic plan for the development of Haiti.

48. Inter-agency collaboration has improved in several fields. The Group visited an integrated programme being run by several agencies (UNDP, the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) and the United Nations Office for Project Services, with support from others) the South Department. The agencies have combined their expertise and resources in areas including watershed management, the promotion of renewable energy, coastal and marine resources management, the construction of roads and bridges and local governance. Through that collaboration, more than 1,300 linear metres of gabion wall have been built and more than 1.5 million seedlings prepared to reforest 1,000 hectares of land. A monitoring of the coastline has also been ensured and support provided to repair damage caused by Hurricane Sandy. Noticeably, 70 per cent of the funds for rehabilitation and mitigation projects have been allocated through municipalities and local directions of sector ministries. The Group praised this clustering of capacities to increase coherence and deliver better results. United Nations entities are encouraged to systematize this approach as much as possible in their field activities.

49. Earlier in 2013, MINUSTAH presented a consolidation plan for the period 2013-2016, which foresees focusing Mission activities on a core set of mandated tasks that can be achieved within a reasonable time frame.[2] The Mission will progressively be reducing its engagement in areas to where other international actors are better placed to achieve results.

50. In this context, the presence of United Nations agencies on the ground remains of particular importance. Under the "Initiative Côte Sud", UNEP, in a laudable example of decentralization, has moved its main office from Port-au-Prince to the South Department. However, given the shortage of donor support owing to the global economic crisis, United Nations entities may not have the means to significantly expand their permanent presence in the provinces. The gradual transfer of responsibility for activities from MINUSTAH to United Nations agencies in areas of common concerns, such as the rule of law, human rights or governance issues, which the Group advocated for in 2012, may prove difficult. The agencies should therefore consider finding innovative ways of asserting their role throughout the country, including joint activities and increased cooperation with local Haitian

[2] See S/2013/139.

institutions. United Nations organizations should therefore provide appropriate backup for the development of such activities. In this regard, the resource mobilization strategy that MINUSTAH is expected to engage in with the Government and development partners, including the United Nations country team, will be key to the gradual transition of the Mission and to ensuring the capacity of the system to fill resource gaps.

51. In the area of police development, MINUSTAH will focus its role on training and capacity-building, in line with the Haitian National Police development plan for the period 2012-2016. As recognized by the Group in its 2012 report, the objective of at least 1,000 additional officers per year needs to be maintained if the police force is to reach a minimum strength of 15,000 officers by the end of 2016. Training and management facilities will also be needed in order to ensure that the institution is up to the task. The Group reiterates its call to the donor community to support the force and its development plan. Given the well-known links between security and development, economic and social progress in the country largely depends on its capacity to perform law enforcement functions and enhance stability.

Towards increased regional cooperation

52. In February 2013, Haiti hosted the twenty-fourth intersessional meeting of the Heads of Government of the Caribbean Community (CARICOM). It was the first time that such a summit had been held in Haiti, and it demonstrated the country's capacity to organize a high-level political event. This was also an opportunity to boost cooperation with CARICOM countries. The Group heard about the need to facilitate trade relations of Haiti with its regional partners, which will be of benefit to the entire Caribbean Community. Haiti can gain from its membership in CARICOM and its partnerships with countries members of the Community in areas such as tourism, where there is considerable experience, access to natural resources, as well as support to agricultural production. Legal and regulatory provisions need to be reviewed in order to facilitate trade relations and to increase their volume.

53. The Organization of American States (OAS) provides countrywide support in key areas, such as the identification card system and electoral support, both in terms of technical assistance and electoral observation. Its support to the country will be particularly important in the forthcoming elections, with around 1,300 candidates running for positions in the 140 communes and 570 sections communales of Haiti. In that respect, the Government is encouraged to finalize the electoral calendar. This will help to secure donor support and give OAS the means to launch the logistical planning of its support operation.

54. The long-term development of Haiti means that the country must find its place in the regional family of nations and build fruitful relations with neighbours. This is expected to gain importance as Haiti advances through the normalization process and benefits from stable relations with immediate and natural counterparts.

V. Conclusions and recommendations

55. Haiti has come a long way since the devastating earthquake of 2010. In 2013, the Group witnessed tangible progress in the reconstruction of the country and considerable efforts are being made to move forward on various fronts. The Government of Haiti has engaged in various wide-scale programmes in both

the economic and social spheres. The architecture for international support has also changed, reflecting the transition from the crisis stage to the elaboration of institutional mechanisms that allow development support to be aligned to the country's national priorities. The Group finds these developments to be particularly encouraging.

56. These positive steps forward cannot hide the extreme vulnerability that the country continues to face, be they environmental, with the country's exposure to natural disasters, economic, as Haiti is subject to external shocks and cannot by itself contain their effects, and social, with extreme poverty widespread, particularly in rural areas. In addition, political instability often threatens to complicate the situation further. These vulnerabilities may be particularly destabilizing if international support, constrained by the budgetary crisis in developed countries, decreases.

57. At this stage, there are as many encouraging signs as there are risks that could destabilize this real but fragile momentum. For these reasons, the Group is of the view that Haiti should remain high on the international agenda. The United Nations should maintain an appropriate level of presence in the country, both through MINUSTAH and the United Nations country team. The United Nations is encouraged to scale up its mentoring role and to strengthen its presence in the provinces. It is also invited to continue to play an important role in encouraging all partners to support the Government's plans and priorities. In this regard, relations between the Government and its partners are expected to bear fruit if conditions for dialogue and transparency are met.

58. For ease of reference, some recommendations contained in the body of the report are summarized below for consideration by the Council.

59. To sustain the recovery and reconstruction process and engage in long-term development, the Group encourages Haiti's development partners to:

(a) Respond to the call made by the United Nations system to fund the humanitarian action plan for 2013, which aims to assist 1 million people identified as the most vulnerable, including through food aid;

(b) Fulfil their commitments for international support in line with the priorities set by the Government as contained in the strategic plan for the development of Haiti and other relevant Government policy documents;

(c) Make full use of the external aid coordination framework as the platform to strengthen mutual accountability between Haiti and its partners;

(d) Contribute to the operationalization of the external aid coordination framework, including through active participation in sectoral and thematic tables and using the tools proposed for information-sharing;

(e) Adjust their support to Haitian capacities and add a capacity-building component to their activities, in a systematic manner;

(f) Increasingly use Government channels and simplify, to the extent possible, disbursement, procurement and other administrative procedures in order to accelerate assistance;

(g) Be responsive to the proposals for State reform made by the Office of Management and Human Resources, including reform of the administration, the

civil service and decentralization, which will need financial support for their implementation;

(h) Support the capacity of the Haitian financial sector to contribute to the dynamism of the private sector and the creation of wealth;

(i) Increase support to rural communities, including the agricultural sector, and involve local authorities in these activities;

(j) Provide financial and other support to preparations for the forthcoming local, municipal and partial senatorial elections;

(k) Continue to support the Haitian National Police and its development plan for the period 2012-2016;

(l) Support the Government of Haiti in its efforts to strengthen disaster resilience and follow up on the action points agreed upon with the group of "Political Champions" for disaster resilience after their visit to Haiti in April 2013.

60. In particular, the United Nations system is called on to:

(a) Continue to support Haitian institutions through strong mentoring functions and to engage development stakeholders in larger-scale mentoring activities, including in the provinces;

(b) Increase the clustering of activities among United Nations entities, thereby decreasing costs and increasing impact;

(c) Maintain a strong presence outside Port-au-Prince, and provide support to local administrative structures, building on the work carried out on disaster preparedness and resilience;

(d) Develop a resource mobilization strategy, taking into account evolving conditions that may derive from the gradual consolidation of MINUSTAH, and include United Nations agencies, funds and programmes in this effort;

(e) Promote and facilitate the alignment of donor support with national priorities, including through assistance in the implementation of the external aid management module in the context of the external aid coordination framework.

61. The Group also wishes to draw the attention of the Haitian authorities to the need to:

(a) Gradually assume the responsibility for activities launched by the United Nations or other development partners, and include them in the budget of relevant Ministries, thereby ensuring the sustainability of development programmes;

(b) Take all necessary steps to ensure that legitimate, credible and well-functioning local authorities are in place in 2013, including duly elected officials, and that they can increasingly engage with development partners;

(c) Ensure the highest level of transparency in the use of international funds, including those related to post-disaster assistance, and improve management procedures in the public sector;

(d) Broaden the tax base, increase capacities to enforce fiscal legislation for private individuals and business and establish a local public finance system allowing

the local governments to plan development and deliver basic services to the population;

(e) Take proactive measures to facilitate trade relations with countries of the region, including through improved legislation and regulation;

(f) Engage in a discussion on a mechanism to lead the reform of land registration, building on the work carried out by the Interministerial Committee for Territorial Management, with broad consultation with various sectors of society;

(g) Engage with partners on a follow-up plan to strengthen the civil registry system;

(h) Accelerate the pace of reform in key sectors, including energy and port administration, in order to give a new boost to the economy;

(i) Engage in a strategic longer-term discussion with civil society on sectors where jobs can be created, in particular for youth, with a special focus on young women;

(j) Follow-up on the announced intention to strengthen partnership with non-governmental organizations, including at a national forum to be held in Port-au-Prince, and pursue timely consultations with non-governmental organizations on legislation related to their status.

Annex

Programme of the visits of the Ad Hoc Advisory Group on Haiti to Washington, D.C., and Haiti

Visit to Washington, D.C., April 2013

Monday, 29 April

10:00 Meeting with representatives of the international financial institutions

- Mr. Alexandre Abrantes, Special Envoy for Haiti, the World Bank
- Mr. Boileau Loko, Mission Chief for Haiti, International Monetary Fund
- Mr. Agustin Aguerre, Manager, Haiti Country Department, Inter-American Development Bank

13:00 Working lunch

Guest speaker: Mr. Robert E. Maguire, Director, Latin American and Hemispheric Studies Program, Elliot School of International Affairs, George Washington University

15:00 Meeting with the Organization of American States (OAS)

- Mr. Albert R. Ramdin, Assistant Secretary General, OAS
- Dialogue with ambassadors and OAS project personnel

Visit to Haiti, May 2013

Tuesday, 28 May

13:15 Arrival at Toussaint Louverture International Airport

14:00 Briefing by Ms. Sophie de Caen, Deputy Special Representative of the Secretary-General/Resident Coordinator/Humanitarian Coordinator a.i. in Haiti

15:30 Meeting at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs

19:00 Dinner hosted by the Special Representative of the Secretary-General a.i.

Wednesday, 29 May

06:30 Visit to the South Department (by helicopter)

- Meeting with local authorities at Les Cayes
- Visit to project sites at Port Salut and Roch-à-Bateau
  - Construction of gabion walls

	– Coastal vulnerability project
	– Watershed management
16:30	Visit to a legal aid project funded by the United Nations Stabilization Mission in Haiti at the Petionville Police Station
18:00	Cocktail reception hosted by the Embassy of Canada
Thursday, 30 May	
9:00	Meeting with civil society organizations
10:30	Meeting with Mr. Laurent Lamothe, Prime Minister of Haiti and Minister of Planning and External Cooperation
14:00	Visit to a joint housing and neighbourhood programme of the United Nations Human Settlements Programme, the International Organization for Migration, the United Nations Population Fund and the United Nations Development Programme at the City Hall of Tabarre
16:00	Meeting with the Office of Management and Human Resources in regard to public administration reform and decentralization
19:00	Dinner with a group of representatives
Friday, 31 May	
9:00	Meeting with Mr. David Bazile, Minister of Interior and Ms. Alta Jean-Baptiste, Director of Civil Protection
11:00	Meeting with the United Nations country team
12:30	Press conference
14:00	Departure to New York